



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



Supporting VGGT monitoring and assessment initiatives by providing data and information tools

Laura Meggiolaro,¹ Marcello Demaria,¹ Romy Sato,² Leila Shamsaifar³ and Neil Sorensen¹

Land Portal Foundation, the Netherlands¹

Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, Germany²

Independent Consultant, Germany

Laura.meggiolaro@landportal.org

**Paper prepared for presentation at the
“2019 WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY”
The World Bank - Washington DC, March 25-29, 2019**



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



Copyright 2019 by author(s). All rights reserved. Readers may make verbatim copies of this document for non-commercial purposes by any means, provided that this copyright notice appears on all such copies.

Abstract

Significant efforts are underway by numerous stakeholders to assess and monitor progress on the implementation of the VGGT. Yet, the question of the specific meaning of monitoring or assessing VGGT implementation remains largely unanswered and there is currently no available database to provide comprehensive information to contribute to this process. The Land portal availability of open access data on the Land portal offers an opportunity to all stakeholder groups to use available data to strengthen their effort of monitoring and assessing VGGT Implementation.

This paper uses the provisions of the VGGT to provide entry points for defining VGGT implementation and its monitoring and assessments. It further provides an overview of some of the relevant monitoring and assessment initiatives on the VGGT. It considers the relevance of institutional efforts, such as the Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF), for monitoring the VGGT, for ensuring the implementation of country-level action plans. It also looks at related civil society initiatives established evaluate VGGT implementation. It illustrates how these efforts are complemented by the Global Donor Platform's Land Governance Programme Map, which monitors donor investments in implementing the VGGT. Finally, the paper features the work of the Land Portal Foundation to consolidate all of these efforts in a global hub.



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



Key Words: Voluntary Guidelines, VGGT, Governance, Tenure Security, Land Monitoring, LGAF

1. Introduction

The VGGT are the internationally negotiated framework to improve land governance. With inputs from over 1000 stakeholders with different cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world, the VGGT were endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security¹ on 11 May 2012. The VGGT promote the recognition and protection of all forms of tenure, including formal, informal and customary and all legitimate tenure rights, including property rights, use rights, rights of passage and seasonal rights. The VGGT are voluntary. Yet, the high-level endorsement and use around the world provide significant momentum and scope for advocacy.

The VGGT seek to improve tenure governance with the overall goals of food security and progressive realization of the right to adequate food, poverty eradication, sustainable livelihoods, social stability, housing security, rural development, environmental protection and sustainable social and economic development. The VGGT provide guidance and information on internationally accepted practices; contribute to the development of policy, legal and organizational frameworks; enhance the transparency and functioning of tenure systems; strengthen the capacities and operations of all persons concerned with tenure governance; and promote the cooperation between actors.

While, according to the Land governance programme map and database of the Global Donor Working Group on Land,² there are currently 253 active programmes worth 2.6 billion USD related to the VGGT and numerous stakeholders around the world have used the VGGT to improve the way access and control over land, fisheries and forests is handled, the question about how VGGT implementation is monitored remains largely unanswered. This uncertainty is largely related to a lack of definition of VGGT implementation per se and a lack of consensus on the comprehensiveness of this exercise.

2. Entry points for defining monitoring of VGGT implementation

¹ <http://www.fao.org/cfs>

² <https://landgov.donorplatform.org/>



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



In general, there is a difference between defining VGGT implementation from an action perspective or from a monitoring perspective. Discussions about the meaning of implementation stem from its definition from the monitoring perspective. The following sections provide entry points to defining VGGT implementation from an action perspective.

Implementation is the act of putting something into practice. In view of the provisions of the VGGT themselves on their use, on the stakeholders that may use them and the principles of implementation, implementation could be considered as any contribution by an individual or group to improve governance of tenure within the framework of the VGGT, while applying the minimum set of implementation principles. Implementation would therefore take as many forms as provisions given in the VGGT. This can involve using the VGGT as a framework that provides an overview or a roadmap of the different topics that are relevant to improving governance of tenure and how they link. It can also involve using the VGGT as a benchmark against which the status quo of tenure governance and its processes as a whole or for selected topics can be compared.

The following section provides an overview of provisions of the VGGT themselves on their use, on the stakeholders that may use them and the principles of implementation, which guided the authors to come to this conclusion.

The VGGT define their own objective in section 1. When distinguishing between what one “seeks to do” and what one “seeks to do something for” in terms of the practical use versus the overall goal of applying the practical use, VGGT implementation may be any action that uses the VGGT to improve governance of tenure by using them:

- i.) for guidance and information on internationally accepted practices;
- ii.) contributing to the development of policy, legal and organizational frameworks;
- iii.) enhancing the transparency and functioning of tenure systems;
- iv.) strengthening the capacities and operations of all persons concerned with tenure governance;
- v.) and promoting the cooperation between actors. (VGGT par. 1.1 and 1.2)

Par 26.1 defines States as the responsible for implementing the VGGT. Yet, all stakeholders can/or may contribute to improving governance of tenure. They have a role in improving the way they do things by themselves, within their own context, and in and through their collaboration with other stakeholders. VGGT par. 2.3 defines who, in principle, can use the VGGT, *“These Guidelines can be used by States; implementing agencies; judicial authorities; local governments; organizations of farmers and smallscale producers, of fishers, and of forest users; pastoralists; indigenous peoples and other communities; civil society; private sector; academia; and all persons concerned to assess tenure governance and identify improvements and apply them.”*

The VGGT further stress the specific roles of stakeholder groups, mainly the State, in individual paragraphs, e.g. “States should”, “business enterprises should”, “Indigenous peoples and other communities with customary tenure systems should”, “development partners and specialized agencies of the United Nations should”. However, having specified the potential to use the VGGT by everyone in



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



par. 2.3, this does not mean that these paragraphs are irrelevant to stakeholders who are not mentioned. These paragraphs are still relevant to all stakeholder groups in learning what responsible practices look like and they may be able to contribute to their realization.

In view of the need for participatory processes and the specific role other stakeholders may play, par. 26.2 further encourages States to set up multi-stakeholder platforms and frameworks to collaborate on the implementation of the VGGT.

Finally, par. 3.B defines basic principles that are essential to contribute to responsible governance of tenure and hence implementation of the VGGT. These include: human dignity, non-discrimination, equity and justice, gender equality, holistic and sustainable approach, consultation and participation, rule of law, transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.

3. Entry points for defining monitoring of VGGT implementation

The previous section defined the act of VGGT as any contribution by an individual or a group to improve governance of tenure within the framework of the VGGT and hence possibilities of implementation are as multi-faceted as provisions in the VGGT. This is relevant in defining what monitoring the VGGT may entail and whether one action may be ranked more significant than another.

The VGGT include several provisions on monitoring, such as on what should be monitored by whom and through which process. The main provisions on monitoring in the VGGT are found in Part 7, Promotion, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In addition, principle 3B10, Continuous improvement, states: "States should improve mechanisms for monitoring and analysis of tenure governance in order to develop evidence-based programmes and secure on-going improvement." Next to these general provisions, additional guidance on monitoring can be found in other parts of the VGGT.

The following analysis provides an overview of VGGT provisions on what should be monitored, by whom and which process should be followed according to the VGGT. In doing so the analysis does not only include provisions that specifically mention monitoring but also those that provide for potentially relevant aspects of monitoring, i.e. assessments and evaluations.

3.1 Monitoring, evaluating and assessing progress in the implementation of the VGGT themselves

Paragraphs 26.1 and 26.2 of the VGGT identify the implementation of the VGGT as one of the subject to be monitored and evaluated.

"In accordance with the voluntary nature of these Guidelines, States have the responsibility for their implementation, monitoring and evaluation." (VGGT, par. 26.1)

"States are encouraged to set up multi-stakeholder platforms and frameworks [...] to monitor and evaluate the implementation in their jurisdictions." (VGGT par. 26.2)



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



Paragraph 26.4 of the VGGT identify the implementation of the VGGT as one of the subject to be assessed and evaluated.

“The Committee on World Food Security should be the global forum where all relevant actors [...] assess progress toward the implementation of these Guidelines. [...] Therefore, the Secretariat of the Committee on World Food Security, in collaboration with the Advisory Group, should report to the Committee on World Food Security on the progress of the implementation of these Guidelines.” (VGGT par. 26.4)³

3.2 The impact of VGGT implementation on broader development goals

Paragraph 26.2 identifies the impact of VGGT implementation on broader development goals as one subject to be evaluated. In specific, these development goals include, the impact of VGGT implementation on improved governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests; on improving food security and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security; and sustainable development.

“States are encouraged to set up multi-stakeholder platforms and frameworks at local, national and regional levels or use such existing platforms and frameworks [...] to evaluate the impact on improved governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests, and on improving food security and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security, and sustainable development.” (VGGT par. 26.2)

Paragraph 26.4 identifies the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the VGGT as one subject to be assessed and evaluated. In specific, the subject of evaluation should be their impact and their contribution to the improvement of tenure governance.

The Committee on World Food Security should be the global forum where all relevant actors [...] assess [...] their relevance, effectiveness and impact. Therefore, the Secretariat of the Committee on World Food Security, in collaboration with the Advisory Group, should [...] evaluate their impact and their contribution to the improvement of tenure governance. (VGGT par. 26.4)

In addition, par. 2.3 and 3.B.10 identify tenure governance as one subject to be assessed.

“These Guidelines can be used by States; implementing agencies; judicial authorities; local governments; organizations of farmers and small-scale producers, of fishers, and of forest users; pastoralists; indigenous peoples and other communities; civil society; private sector;

³ Par. 26.4 does not say monitor but assess. Hence, it is not clear whether this could be a one-time assessment, or However, in view of the statement “the Secretariat of the CFS, in collaboration with the Advisory Group should report to the CFS on the progress of the implementation of these Guidelines”, one must assume that monitoring is required to assess whether progress has been achieved.



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



academia; and all persons concerned to assess tenure governance and identify improvements and apply them.” (VGGT par. 2.3)

“Continuous improvement: States should improve mechanisms for monitoring and analysis of tenure governance in order to develop evidence-based programmes and secure on-going improvements.” (VGGT par. 3.B.10)

3.3 Specific aspects of improving governance of tenure, for which the need to monitor is additionally emphasized or further defined, such as in the case of agreements on large-scale land transfers or redistributive reforms

In addition, to the overall provisions on monitoring described in the previous sections and the requirement to improve mechanisms for monitoring and analysis for all programmes aimed at improving governance of tenure (VGGT par. 3B10), the VGGT further emphasize the need for monitoring in addressing specific aspects of improving governance of tenure. The following sections provide an overview of those sections.

a.) Policy, legal and organizational frameworks related to tenure

Paragraph 5.8, specifically emphasizes the need for States and other parties to regularly review and monitor policy, legal and organizational frameworks to maintain their effectiveness.

“States and other parties should regularly review and monitor policy, legal and organizational frameworks to maintain their effectiveness.” (VGGT par. 5.8)

b.) Delivery of services: Adherence to ethical standards

Paragraph 6.8, specifically emphasizes the need for relevant professional associations for services related to tenure to develop, publicize and monitor the implementation of high levels of ethical behaviour. It further emphasized the need for public and private sector parties to adhere to applicable ethical standards, and be subject to disciplinary action in case of violations.

“Relevant professional associations for services related to tenure should develop, publicize and monitor the implementation of high levels of ethical behaviour. Public and private sector parties should adhere to applicable ethical standards, and be subject to disciplinary action in case of violations.” (VGGT par. 6.8)

c.) Public land fisheries and forests

Paragraph 8.11, specifically emphasizes the need for States to monitor the outcome of allocation programmes on public land, fisheries and forests, including the gender-differentiated impacts on food



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



security and poverty eradication as well as their impacts on social, economic and environmental objectives, and introduce corrective measures as required.

“States should monitor the outcome of allocation programmes, including the gender-differentiated impacts on food security and poverty eradication as well as their impacts on social, economic and environmental objectives, and introduce corrective measures as required.” (VGGT par. 8.11)

d.) Monitoring market information and the adherence to ethical standards

The VGGT provides additional guidance on monitoring market information and the adherence to ethical standards in the operation of markets. Paragraph 11.4, specifically emphasizes the need for States to monitor information on market transactions and information on market values with a view to taking action where markets have adverse impacts or discourage wide and equitable market participation

“States should monitor this information and take action where markets have adverse impacts or discourage wide and equitable market participation.” (VGGT par. 11.4)

Paragraph 11.7, specifically emphasizes the need for State and non-state actors to monitor the adherence to ethical standards in the operation of markets.

“State and non-state actors should adhere to applicable ethical standards. They should publicize and monitor the implementation of these standards in the operation of markets in order to prevent corruption, particularly through public disclosure.” (VGGT par. 11.7)

e.) Investments

The VGGT specifically emphasize the need for assessments and the identification of tenure rights with a view to investments and particularly with a view to investments that involve large-scale transactions of tenure rights. In doing they emphasize the need for particular precaution and the need to monitor and assess, even if larger assessments and monitoring are not possible due to capacity constraints.

Par. 3.2 emphasizes particular caution for business enterprises. It requires business enterprises to act with due diligence and to include appropriate risk management systems, identifying and assessing actual or potential impacts in order to avoid infringing on the human rights and legitimate tenure rights of other.

“Business enterprises should act with due diligence to avoid infringing on the human rights and legitimate tenure rights of others. They should include appropriate risk management systems to prevent and address adverse impacts on human rights and legitimate tenure rights. [...]Business enterprises should identify and assess any actual or potential impacts on human rights and legitimate tenure rights in which they may be involved.” (VGGT par. 3.2)



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



In addition, par. 12.14 requires particularly for the case of large-scale transactions in tenure rights, for States and affected parties to contribute to the effective monitoring of the implementation and impacts of agreements.

“States and affected parties should contribute to the effective monitoring of the implementation and impacts of agreements involving large-scale transactions in tenure rights, including acquisitions and partnership agreements. States should take corrective action where necessary to enforce agreements and protect tenure and other rights and provide mechanisms whereby aggrieved parties can request such action.” (VGGT par. 12.14)

Further, for the case of large-scale transactions in tenure rights, the VGGT emphasize the need for independent impact assessments and the identification of existing rights while such agreements are being considered. Paragraph 12.10, specifically emphasizes the need for different parties to assess the potential positive and negative impacts that those investments could have on tenure rights, food security and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food, livelihoods and the environment. They further require the States to make such provisions and that this process should be conducted through consultation with all affected parties consistent with the principles of consultation and participation of the VGGT and the assessments should be conducted in an independent fashion.

“When investments involving large-scale transactions of tenure rights, including acquisitions and partnership agreements, are being considered, States should strive to make provisions for different parties to conduct prior independent assessments on the potential positive and negative impacts that those investments could have on tenure rights, food security and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food, livelihoods and the environment. [...] This process should be conducted through consultation with all affected parties consistent with the principles of consultation and participation of these Guidelines.” (VGGT par. 12.10)

Finally, par. 12.10 emphasizes the need for the State to ensure that existing legitimate tenure rights and claims are identified, including those of customary and informal tenure, as well as the rights and livelihoods of other people also affected by the investment, such as small-scale producers. The process should be systematic and impartial.

“States should ensure that existing legitimate tenure rights and claims, including those of customary and informal tenure, are systematically and impartially identified, as well as the rights and livelihoods of other people also affected by the investment, such as small-scale producers.” (VGGT par. 12.10)

f.) Redistributive reforms

The VGGT specifically emphasize the need for assessments, monitoring and evaluation in the case of redistributive reforms. In doing they emphasize the need for particular precaution and the need to



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



monitor and assess, even if larger assessments and monitoring are not possible due to capacity constraints.

Par. 15.7 draws out the possibility to conduct assessments on the potential positive and negative impacts of redistributive reforms could have on tenure rights, food security and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food, livelihoods and the environment. It further emphasizes the need for this assessment to be conducted consistent with the principles of consultation and participation of the VGGT and for these assessments to be potentially used as a basis to determine the measures needed to support beneficiaries and improve the redistributive programme.

“When redistributive reforms are being considered, States may, if so desired, conduct assessments on the potential positive and negative impacts that those reforms could have on tenure rights, food security and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food, livelihoods and the environment. This assessment process should be conducted consistent with the principles of consultation and participation of the VGGT. Assessments may be used as a basis to determine the measures needed to support beneficiaries and improve the redistributive programme.”
(VGGT par. 15.7)

Par. 15.10 emphasizes the need to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of redistributive reform programmes including associated support policies, and their impacts on access to land and food security of both men and women and, where necessary. In terms of process this paragraph requires the participation of involved parties and for States to introduce corrective measures where necessary.

“States, with the participation of the involved parties, should monitor and evaluate the outcomes of redistributive reform programmes, including associated support policies, as listed in paragraph 15.8, and their impacts on access to land and food security of both men and women and, where necessary, States should introduce corrective measures.” (VGGT par. 15.10)

g.) Expropriation and compensation

Par. 16.6 emphasizes the need to objectively assess values in cases of expropriation and compensation.

“All parties should endeavour to prevent corruption, particularly through use of objectively assessed values, transparent and decentralized processes and services, and a right to appeal.” (VGGT par. 16.6)

h.) Valuation

Par. 18.3 provides guidance on the process required for accurate and reliable assessments of values, i.e. by developing policies and laws that encourage and require transparency in valuing rights and by recording, analyzing and making accessible sale prices and other relevant information.

“States should develop policies and laws that encourage and require transparency in valuing tenure rights. Sale prices and other relevant information should be recorded, analysed and made



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



accessible to provide a basis for accurate and reliable assessments of values.” (VGGT par. 18.3)

i.) Taxation

Par. 19.3 provides guidance on the process of assessing values and taxable amounts, i.e. through efficiency and transparency, making assessments of valuations and taxation public, providing a right to appeal, using objectively assessed values.

“States should administer taxes efficiently and transparently. Staff of implementing agencies should receive training that includes methodologies. Taxes should be based on appropriate values. Assessments of valuations and taxable amounts should be made public. States should provide taxpayers with a right to appeal against valuations. States should endeavour to prevent corruption in taxation administration, through increased transparency in the use of objectively assessed values.” (VGGT par. 19.3)

j.) Regulated spatial planning

Par. 20.1 requires States to monitor the compliance with plans for regulated spatial planning and par. 20.4 further requires Implementing agencies to report on the results of compliance monitoring.

“States should conduct regulated spatial planning, and monitor and enforce compliance with those plans, including balanced and sustainable territorial development, in a way that promotes the objectives of these Guidelines.” (VGGT par. 20.1)

“Implementing agencies should report on results of compliance monitoring.” (VGG par. 20.4)

4. Existing monitoring initiatives that are relevant to VGGT implementation

Similar to the multi-faceted provisions and entry points to monitoring as provided for in the VGGT and described in the previous section, different organizations propose entry points to monitoring the VGGT or aspects of them. The following provides a non-exclusive overview.

4.1 Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF)

The Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF)⁴, which was developed by the World Bank, the FAO, IFAD, UN-Habitat, African Union, and IFPRI, has demonstrated its relevance of supporting the integration of VGGT principles in country level action plans. The VGGT and LGAF are mutually reinforcing, with the VGGT focusing on principles and overall guidance, and the LGAF on an evidence-based assessment of the current status of land governance and entry points, on which the VGGT can build.

Motivation for developing the LGAF was to mitigate the controversial aspects of land policy reforms, improve its information base, and facilitate local analysis. This is the basis for evidence based and participatory policy development. Resources are needed for implementing policy reform and expand

⁴ <http://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/land-governance-assessment-framework>



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



land governance related service delivery. Local engagement and better information can potentially significantly increase the level of support by the World Bank and other development partners to the land sector, if identified as a priority for investment, and included in the country strategy.

LGAF is a country level, independent and comprehensive assessment guided by a framework of indicators, and undertaken by local experts using existing data and information. The LGAF assessment combines an analysis of the policy and institutional framework, with an assessment of the actual practice of implementation. It does so by compiling available data, information and experience, and drawing on expertise from all levels within government, academia, CSO/NGO and the private sector. The participatory process used consists of a series of steps to arrive at a shared assessment of the status of land governance in the country and agreed priorities. The LGAF process helps create a local constituency around land and determines who can act as 'champions' or change agents. The results are the basis for policy recommendations and an action plan, with opportunities for innovating, identifying knowledge gaps and monitoring indicators to track progress. LGAF, methodology and country reports are publicly available.

The LGAF Framework is based on international standards of good land governance and constructed around nine thematic modules, each composed of land indicators and dimensions, with predefined scores from A to D. The scoring is quantified with the thresholds being defined according to what is regarded internationally as good practice. Country teams draw their own conclusions based on available evidence without the interference of the WB, FAO or other development partners. The scores indicate where a country is doing well and areas for improvement. The framework provides a format that facilitates the communication of findings and recommendations with policy makers.

The LGAF framework is compliant with the VGGT. FAO has developed a methodology to evaluate the usefulness and completeness of existing land governance assessment tools in the context of the VGGT for use at the country level and which was tested with LGAF reports for Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and the Philippines. The results shows that LGAF indicators and dimensions cover most of the VGGT principles and technical sections, and that the instrument provides a good base for assessing in a short period of time and at a low cost the land governance status at the country level in the context of the Guidelines. LGAF does not cover all themes of the Guidelines, however, as the focus is mainly on land. An optional module for forests exists and it was recommended to develop another optional module on fisheries. FAO also recommended that the local VGGT platform could build on the assessment by linking each recommendation to the VGGT principles, as well as identify suitable technical guidelines and good practices made available by FAO and other partners. Following the FAO review, the framework was adjusted by adding dimensions to address the gaps identified and making the approach more modular, which facilitates adding optional modules like forests and fisheries as well as mining.

Building synergy around reinforcing the use of international standards for good land governance will be relatively easy as there is likely to be a large overlap with many people and organizations being a part of both initiatives, and this is to be developed on a case by case basis. VGGT and LGAF are also mutually reinforcing, with the VGGTs focusing on principles and overall guidance, and the LGAF on an evidence-based assessment of the current status of land governance and entry points, on which the VGGT can build.



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



The Land Portal has integrated dynamic visualizations of the LGAF 2013⁵ and 2016⁶ datasets, which consists of 27 core land governance indicators that are further broken down into a total of 116 dimensions. These dimensions are scored by selecting an appropriate answer among a list of pre-coded statements that draw on global experience.

- (A): Very Good Practice
- (B): Good Practice
- (C): Weak Practice
- (D): Very Weak Practice

4.2 ActionAid VGGT Assessment Toolkit

ActionAid has created a VGGT Assessment Toolkit⁷ as a comprehensive VGGT monitoring initiative that assesses legal frameworks and tenure governance arrangements in Mozambique, Tanzania, Senegal and Haiti with a focus on women and small-scale food producers. This tool is based upon six principles that were drawn from the VGGT and the African Union Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa, which are used to highlight what each country needs to do in order to ensure improved governance of tenure, enhance women's rights to land and tenure security, and protect local communities from large scale land acquisitions. The toolkit also builds on existing FAO Governance of Tenure technical guides and related civil society efforts.

This Toolkit aims to monitor country implementation of the VGGT and AU F&G, with a focus on women and small-scale food producers and rural, agricultural communities; incorporate community empowerment and capacity-building to enhance communities' understanding of the VGGT and AU F&G (and related land frameworks), and build their capacity to advocate for VGGT implementation; build understanding of how Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries support and align their actions with the VGGT as they relate to foreign aid, trade and investment programmes that impact on tenure governance in other countries; and enable concise presentation of results of VGGT implementation as a basis for cross-country comparison, and for tracking changes over time. This gender-sensitive toolkit enables civil society organisations (CSOs), women and communities, as well as and other actors to assess each country's current legal framework and tenure governance arrangements in line with the provisions of the VGGTs and the AU F&G. Where it has been piloted, the Toolkit has also proved to be valuable in building communities and other stakeholders' capacity and understanding and internalization of the VGGTs towards responsible land tenure governance.

4.3 Interlaken Group Operational Guidance Tool

⁵ <https://landportal.org/book/dataset/wb-lgaf2013>

⁶ <https://landportal.org/book/dataset/wb-lgaf2016>

⁷ http://actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/aa_vggt_toolkit_single_pages.pdf



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



The Interlaken Group developed an interactive operational guidance tool⁸ for businesses and companies to align their operations with the VGGT. The guide has been developed to provide senior-level and operational teams at leading companies an entry point to understanding and implementing the VGGT. The stated intent is to provide a more manageable presentation of the VGGT, along with steps to ensure that a company acts consistently with them. The guidance clarifies a company's basic role and key responsibilities under the VGGT, citing relevant text from the VGGT, providing information on where to look for more detailed tools. This ensures that companies have integrated the required skills and knowledge to assess land and forest tenure rights in areas where they or their suppliers operate. Moreover, the guidance aims at ensuring that host communities have played an active role in negotiating land and forest use or sales with companies and governments, while women's legitimate tenure rights are respected and strengthened.

First, the tool provides corporate and project level guidance to reassure the public and markets that it is acting in a manner consistent with the VGGT. These statements reflect the Interlaken Group's understanding of a company's responsibilities under the VGGT. The relevant articles of the VGGT are identified for each statement, along with examples of indicators that can be used to verify each. When possible, useful resources to inform company actions are also provided. The guidance contained here begins with high-level corporate commitments to the VGGT. Requisite responsibilities that all companies must uphold, should they wish to act consistently with the VGGT. It provides guidance according to the five project types that are most likely to be initiated by a company making land-based investments. Each project type has certain characteristics that distinguish it from the others. The tool presents a few of the key considerations that a company should internalize in order to act consistently with the intent of the VGGT. It also relates the VGGT commitments to those of other international instruments. Finally, the tool features company commitments to improving land tenure governance from some of the world's largest agribusiness companies have already made commitments to the VGGT and are working to improve land and forest tenure governance where they work.

4.4 Global Donor Working Group on Land Land Governance Programme Map

Cooperating with the Global Donor Working Group on Land, the USAID led a data collection and mapping project that gathered information on donor investments to implement the VGGT. As a result of this collaboration, the Land Governance Programme Map⁹ was developed in 2013, allowing for more transparency of donor investments in land governance. The overall aim of the database is to improve donor coordination and to support implementation of the VGGT. In order to achieve the ambitious objectives of the VGGT, which include to promote secure tenure rights and equitable access to land, fisheries and forests as a means to ensure food security for all, a clear understanding of who is doing what and where in the land and resource governance sector is necessary. The database therefore contains information on the location, duration, funding and scope of each programme, as well as on the specific aspects of the VGGT chapters it supports. The Map of Donors retains 717 projects in 135 countries with a total value of 8.4 billion dollars and contains information the location, duration, funding and scope of each programme, as well as on the specific aspects of the Voluntary Guidelines it supports.

⁸ <https://www.interlaken.org/interactive-guidance-tool>

⁹ <https://landgov.donorplatform.org/>



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



The interactive mapping tool displays where different donors and development agencies are working and what they do with respect to land and resource governance. The database allows donors to include links to supplemental resources, such as reports on their programme websites. This information helps various stakeholders identify opportunities to leverage their resources for greater impact.

4.5 Other VGGT-related databases and tools

The Legal Assessment Tool (LAT)¹⁰ for gender-equitable land tenure was developed by FAO's Gender and Land Rights Database (GLRD) for the purpose of providing prompt, targeted and effective policy advice and capacity development to FAO's Member countries working towards gender-equitable land tenure. This tool includes numerous VGGT-related indicators.

The Land Portal Foundation has published qualitative legal dataset and infographic that measures national expropriation laws against the VGGT.¹¹ This qualitative dataset shows how national laws measure up against the international standards on expropriation, compensation, and resettlement as established in Section 16 of the VGGT.

5. VGGT Platform on the Land Portal

Despite all of these initiatives, key information about if and how countries are adopting the VGGT remains fragmented, difficult to locate, and/or not easily accessible or usable, which has made it challenging to track and monitor who is doing what in terms of VGGT implementation. Following internationally recognized linked open data standards, not all of the information has been published. Furthermore, local data and knowledge related to the VGGT is currently underrepresented.

The Land Portal Foundation is creating a platform devoted to consolidating data and information on the VGGT. The Governance of Tenure web pages provide extensive data, tools and material on the VGGT with links to other Tenure-related topics. The pages display a variety of publications developed in coordination with teams working in the different sectors covered by the VGGT, as well as related data, maps, news, blogs, organisations, tools, guidelines, examples of implementation and other multimedia contents. A significant amount of VGGT-related information is already published online on the Land Portal. However, this global online hub will ensure greater accessibility and use of a wide range of VGGT-related documentation through improved knowledge sharing at all levels.

Governments and other stakeholder groups need to make informed policy decisions that comply with the VGGT. By making VGGT-related data, and tools widely accessible and disseminated in a user-friendly manner, the adoption and implementation of the VGGT can be tracked and monitored more effectively at global, regional and country levels. In addition, organising VGGT-related information in a user-friendly manner which complies with internationally recognised open access standards, can stimulate the participation further and increase the variety of stakeholders contributing to the implementation and monitoring efforts of the VGGT in each country, which is in line with the provisions included in the VGGT document itself (such as in par. 26.1 and 26.2 - See section 2 and 3 of this paper for further details).

¹⁰ <https://landportal.org/book/dataset/fao-lat>

¹¹ <https://landportal.org/book/dataset/nkt-un-voluntaryguidelines-principle16>



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



There are a multiplicity of initiatives working towards the monitoring of the implementation of the VGGT, but the development community is asking whether these are resulting in meaningful information, and, what is the state of the art at the country level. There is a need for better understanding both global and local challenges and good practices, including information on country-level implementation and monitoring processes in the context of the VGGT.

The new VGGT platform developed by Land Portal tracks data and information that relates to VGGT implementation, provide open access to a wide range of VGGT related documents and organise this wealth of contents to facilitate understanding, access and reuse of this information. The final structure of this portfolio integrates the feedbacks provided by land tenure experts and organisations with a long experience in the land governance sector, which makes it the result of a collaborative and high-level consultation effort.



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT)





Voluntary Guidelines on the
Governance of Tenure

[Jump to VGGT page...](#)

The VGGT are the internationally negotiated framework to improve land governance. Drafted by over 1000 stakeholders with different cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world, the VGGT were negotiated by Member States of the [Committee on World Food Security \(CFS\)](#) and endorsed on 11 May 2012. According to the [Land governance programme map and database](#) of the Global Donor Working Group on Land, there are currently 253 active programmes worth 2.6 billion USD related to the VGGT.

The Land Portal aggregates [information](#), [data](#), [projects](#) and [events](#) to demonstrate the progress and challenges of improving governance of tenure in line within the VGGT worldwide.



Understanding the VGGT

Purpose, content and history of the VGGT



Putting the VGGT into practice

What does implementation mean? Who can implement? How is implementation monitored?

- [VGGT Country Info](#)
- [VGGT Endorsement](#)
- [VGGT Programmes](#)

Country Information by VGGT section

Country-level information providing an overview of the status quo against the provisions of the VGGT



Featured Resources



[Download the VGGT](#)



[Download the VGGT at a glance](#)



Land governance Programme Map & Database
821 programmes, 248 active, 573 completed
USD 2.6 billion for active programmes

According to the Land governance programme map and database of the Global Donor Working Group on Land, there are currently 253 active programmes worth 2.6 billion USD related to the VGGT. [Browse the data and learn more...](#)

Tools & Guides



[Valuing Land Tenure Rights](#)

Library





Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security

Reports & Research
December, 2012

The guidelines are the first comprehensive, global instrument on tenure and its administration to be prepared through intergovernmental negotiations. The guidelines set out principles and internationally accepted standards of responsible practices for the use and control of land, fisheries and forests.



[Responsible](#)



Catalyzing Innovation

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 25-29, 2019



The landing page of the portfolio provide easy access to the VGGT document itself, as well as to a key range of relevant publications, guidelines, tools, blogs, data, news, multimedia contents and much more. In addition, the landing page already organise information on the VGGTs according to 3 main knowledge paths. The first one, titled "*Understanding the VGGT*" is a general information path, wich gives a general overview of what the VGGT are, what is their purpose, what is the content of the VGGT and what is the history - which includes their evolution over time - behind this crucial instrument that becomes so central to global and local land governance issues. The second knowledge path, titled "Putting the VGGTs into practice", focuses on the key issue of the practical implementation of the VGGT and answer to questions such as: What does implementation means? Who can implement the VGGT? How is the implementation monitored? In addition, this section provide a collection of examples of VGGT implementation efforts in different parts of the world, based on existing reports, case studies and relevant publications. The third and last knowledge path included in the portfolio is more "visual" and and brings together country level information using a dynamic set of interactive maps. These maps include a list of the Land Portal Country portfolios -- the structure of which has been harmonised, updated and modified in order to provide an overview of the status quo against the provisions of the VGGT in each country -- on which we have VGGT related information and data; the map of the countries that endorsed the the VGGT in different high-level international fora; the map of ongoing donor-funded projects related to the VGGT, as provided by the Global Donor Working Group on Land (GDWGL - Land governance Programme Map & Database).

Conclusions

Implementation is the act of putting something into practice. In view of the provisions of the VGGT themselves on their use, on the stakeholders that may use them and the principles of implementation, implementation could be considered as any contribution by an individual or group to improve governance of tenure within the framework of the VGGT, while applying the minimum set of implementation principles.

Likewise, according to the provisions of the VGGT, the scope of monitoring and assessing implementation of the VGGT can vary. It includes monitoring the impact of implementing the VGGT on broader development goals; monitoring the implementation of the VGGT themselves and monitoring or assessing specific aspects of implementation.

The availability of open access data on the Land portal offers an opportunity to all stakeholder groups to use available data to strengthen their effort of monitoring and assessing VGGT implementation.